

# FRIVOLOUS ATTITUDE TOWARDS SINS

إستخفاف المعاصي

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*Hakim-ul-Ummat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi*  
(R.A)

Translated by  
**Sheikh Abdul Hameed**

Reviewed by  
**Syed Abrar Hussain**

This speech was delivered on 3rd Rabi-ul-Awwal 1329 AH on the subject of "Frivolous Attitude towards Sins" at the residence of Qazi saheb in Rampur Minharan after Isha prayers. The duration of this discourse was two and a half hours. It was recorded by Maulvi Nazar Hussain

## **FRIVOLOUS ATTITUDE TOWARDS SINS**

**Sermon/Preacher:** Hakim-ul-Ummat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi (R.A)

**Translator:** Sheikh Abdul Hameed

**Reviewer:** Professor Anjum Basharat,  
Amb<sup>®</sup> Syed Abrar Hussain

**Editor:** Dr. Khalil Ahmad Thanvi  
Muhammad Muneeb Siddiqui

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## FOREWORD

Sheikh-ul-Hadees Hazrat Maulana Musharraf Ali Thanvi had desired for a long time to get the speeches of **Hakim-ul-Ummat Hazrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi** translated into English, so that the modern educated class could also benefit from them. He assigned this duty to a former civil servant **Sheikh Abdul Hameed** who complied and translated thirty speeches.

Both Maulana Musharraf Ali Thanvi and Sheikh Abdul Hameed passed away before these speeches could be composed and published. I thought it was my responsibility not to let all their hard work go to waste. However, before getting them published I wanted to get them reviewed by a person who knows not only English but also the language of the original speeches which have mix of Urdu, Persian and Arabic. Luckily I found him in the person of my nephew Ambassador® **Syed Abrar Hussain**, he readily agreed to review the translation of these speeches, one by one.

Now the first speech “Frivolous Attitude towards Sins” is before you. This speech was published in Urdu in 1993 by Idara Ashraf Al Tehqeeq with S.No 21. May Allah Almighty help and enable us to continue this series of the English version of Hazrat Thanvi’s speeches. May Allah SAW accept the efforts of all those who have contributed towards this cause.

**Dr. Khalil Ahmad Thanvi** (Vice Principal)

Idara Ashraf Al Tehqeeq – Jamia Darul Uloom Islamia. Lahore

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## **A WORD ABOUT TRANSLATOR**

Sheikh Abdul Hameed, born in 1916 at Kapurthala (India), held a BA Hons degree from Government College Lahore. He also passed the LLB exam but did not practise law and joined the civil service instead. He retired as DSA from Combined Military Accounts in 1974.

Being a religious minded person, he joined the spiritual order of Naqshbandiah as a disciple of Professor Sheikh Wajeehuddin. Subsequently he also adhered to Hazrat Maulana Mausharraf Ali Thanvi for guidance. The latter advised him to read the speeches of Hakim-ul-Ummat Hazrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi which he thoroughly did. Maulana Mausharraf Ali Thanvi, also expressed his desire to get these speeches of Hazrat Hakim-ul-Ummat translated into English for the benefit of the new generation. This led Sheikh Abdul Hameed to start work on this important project in 1996. He continued this hard work for quite a few years and translated 30 speeches. However, a few years before his death, his declining health and weak eyesight compelled him to hang it up. He died in 2013.

May Allah Almighty accept his hard work and sincere efforts for this great project and make it a source of perpetual blessings for him. Ameen.

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

**“In the name of ALLAH (SWT) the most Gracious  
the most Merciful”**

## **Preface of the Speech (خطبة مأثوره)**

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ نَحْمَدُهُ وَنَسْتَغِيثُهُ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُهُ وَنُؤْمِنُ بِهِ وَنَتَوَكَّلُ عَلَيْهِ وَنَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ شُرُورِ أَنْفُسِنَا وَمِنْ سَيِّئَاتِ أَعْمَالِنَا مَنْ يَهْدِهِ اللَّهُ فَلَا مُضِلَّ لَهُ وَمَنْ يَضِلَّهُ فَلَا هَادِيَ لَهُ وَنَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ وَنَشْهَدُ أَنَّ سَيِّدَنَا وَمَوْلَانَا مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَأَصْحَابِهِ وَبَارَكَ وَسَلَّمَ.

All praise be to Allah. We praise Him; and we seek His help; and we ask for His forgiveness; and we believe in Him; and we rely upon Him. And we seek refuge in Allah from the ills of our souls and from the vices of our deeds. Whomsoever Allah guides, none can mislead him; and whomsoever Allah sends astray, none can guide him. We bear witness that there is no god but Allah alone and there is no associate with Him. We also bear that Muhammad is His servant and His messenger,

may Allah bless him, his descendants and companions.

After this, I solicit Allah's protection from the Satan who is a cursed being.

In the name of Allah, the most Gracious, the most Merciful.

إِذْ تَلَقَّوْنَهُ بِأَلْسِنَتِكُمْ وَتَقُولُونَ بِأَفْوَاهِكُمْ مَا لَيْسَ لَكُمْ بِهِ عِلْمٌ  
وَتَحْسَبُونَهُ هَيِّئًا وَهُوَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ عَظِيمٌ

“When you were welcoming it with your tongues, and were saying with your mouths something of which you had no knowledge, and were taking it as a trivial matter, while in the sight of Allah it was grave.”<sup>(1)</sup>

## An extension

(تمهيد)

The above verse from Surah Al-Noor condemns frivolous attitude towards sins (saying):

وَتَحْسَبُونَهُ هَيِّئًا وَهُوَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ عَظِيمٌ

“You were taking it as a trivial matter, while in the sight of Allah it was grave”. This verse refers to the incident of IFK (افك) and in this incident false accusations were levelled against an innocent person. The verse contains a strong rebuke from Allah Almighty for taking so lightly the aspersions cast over a pious soul.

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(1) Surah An-Nur, Verse 15.

Now let us ascertain whether the intention of the verse is to censure the frivolity towards the particular sin which became the cause of revelation of this *ayah* or frivolity towards every major sin is condemnable. A careful examination shows that the *ayah* does not confine itself to the specified sin. The revelation has a general application and hence it cannot be confined to any space-time context. As to the question whether the revelation refers to major sins or minor ones, a careful scrutiny leaves no doubt that this verse makes no such distinction. Every sin, though it might appear minor, is in fact a major sin because it is disobedience to Allah Almighty.

### **All Sins are Major Sins** (گناہوں کی بڑائی)

Evidently disobedience, of whatever kind, is bad. The categorization of sins into major and minor is only relative. One sin may be termed as major while the other might be called minor, but the fact remains that both are sins. In fact all sins should be regarded as major sins; none should be taken lightly.

The difference between them is illustrated by the following two examples. Our galaxy is so small

when compared to the whole universe, but in reality it's not as small as it appears in comparison. The second example is that of dirt and filth that contaminate everything around them.

Another way of looking at this issue is that disobedience looks worse when it is seen in disregard to the kindness showered upon us by the One Whose greatness and benevolence demand a different attitude altogether. Allah's greatness and benevolence are matchless and unparalleled. Disobedience to Him (whether pertaining to the so called major or minor sins) should therefore, be regarded as an evil of worst order. In short one should never go near committing of any sin. But often this is not done. The reason is that some sins are treated as minor ones and hence often committed. Therefore, Muslim jurists keeping in view this human weakness have written that the classification of sins into major and minor is tantamount to *kufr* (infidelity). In conclusion we may say that all kinds of disobedience to Allah Almighty constitute a serious offence and are therefore, highly condemnable.

## **A Sin or a Spark**

(گناہ کی چنگاری)

A sin is like a fire. A spark is just as instrumental in setting a house on fire as a burning charcoal. A minor sin is like a spark while a major one is like a burning charcoal; both have the capacity to spread fire. Probing into whether a particular sin is a major or minor one, is like saying that we would avoid it if it were a major one, but no problem for the sins categorized as minor. We may seek the permission of such people to place a small spark of fire in their thatched roof. If this cannot be permitted, how can disobedience to Allah be allowed. In the beginning a sin is like a spark but it is likely to expand into an all-consuming fire. When a man commits what he considers to be a minor sin, he is unable to get rid of its evil effects. Insisting on its minor character, he continues committing it and starts taking it lightly. From this aspect, it becomes a major sin.

## **A Mere Lip Repentance**

(توبہ بر لب)

Some people commit sins hoping to repent one day. But they are badly mistaken in this supposition because when someone adopts a sinful life as a habit, then repentance becomes difficult for him. When a person commits a sin

and he has not yet started relishing it, it remains easy to turn back, but when one gets used to it, it becomes difficult to give it up. Moreover, when minor sins are not abandoned, the hesitation to do major sins also disappears; one becomes bold and gradually starts committing major sins. It is like efforts to keep one's dress clean from mire while walking through muddy water on a rainy day. But when the garments get partly soiled, the efforts to save them cease and consequently they are completely wet and unclean.

Similar is the case of sin; the longer one indulges in it, the harder it becomes to get rid of it because it turns into a habit. Instances of habitual sins can be seen amongst landlords and cultivators. Most common of them are: (i) show of misplaced passion; (ii) oppression; (iii) fictitious sale (of fruit or crops); (iv) mis-appropriation of a property belonging to orphans and minor children. Such sins are committed by these people without any hesitation or fear but drinking is shunned. This different attitude against drinking is due to different habits. It is thus proved that habit makes people repeat sins. They start taking them lightly and ultimately consider them good. Repentance becomes difficult and if they do entertain any

feelings of regret, these feelings are superficial. A Persian verse quoted in support states:

سبحه برکف توبه بربل دل پرازشوق گناه  
معصیت را خنده می آید براستغفار ما

“A man has beads in his hand, words of penitence on his lips, but his heart is full of desires for sins; such penitence must be a laughing stick for the sin also”.

To expect repentance from people committing the kind of sins mentioned above is out of question; to the contrary, they consider it below their dignity and honour to give them up. They feel no regret or remorse. In order to assess one's degree of faith, one should search one's soul and try to find out whether one feels happier with the performance of a righteous deed and feels aggrieved when he commits an evil deed.

اذا سرتک حسنتک وساءتک سیئتک

In short, repentance becomes hard for these reasons. It is therefore foolish to commit a sin in the hope of compensating later on (by promising not to sin any more). Thus it is quite evident that sheer imprudence emboldens people to commit sin. For they go on deceiving themselves that the door of repentance is always open for them. They behave like someone who is in possession of an

anti-burn ointment and keeps on burning his fingers in the hope of relieving his pain with the application of that ointment. Would you not call such a man a complete dunce? Has any wise person ever attempted to do so? If one cannot be so bold about the fire of this world, how can one face the hellfire which is seventy times severer. It should also be borne in mind that while the application of the ointment is completely within one's control, there shall be no such protection available from the hellfire.

## **Truth about Repentance** (حقیقت توبہ)

To repent appears within one's reach but in reality, it is not so when certain other things relating to it are taken into consideration. The reality of repentance is remorse and the burning which one's heart feels after commitment of a sin. That has been given the name of *Tauba* (repentance). The on-set of the pangs, the sadness and the burning sensation however, does not lie within one's own powers. Here a doubt may arise in a student's mind: if repentance is not

within one's power, why we have been commanded to repent especially in view of the Quranic verse which says:

لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا

“Allah does not obligate anyone beyond his capacity”<sup>(1)</sup>

The doubt is cleared if what is said to lie within one's power is considered in two parts: (i) that which lies entirely within one's power; and (ii) that of which only the means lie within one's power. Repentance falls in the second category. The means that are conducive to repentance are the meditation over Allah's Greatness and a reflection over the horrors of his chastisement. This meditation prescribed by Allah, produces the feelings of remorse and regret which in other words is the essence of repentance. This is the meaning of the command given in the above verse of the Quran. At another place the Quran says:

وَالَّذِينَ إِذَا فَعَلُوا فَحِشَةً أَوْ ظَلَمُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ ذَكَرُوا اللَّهَ فَاسْتَغْفَرُوا  
لِدُنُوبِهِمْ وَمَنْ يَغْفِرِ الدُّنُوبَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَلَمْ يُصِرُّوا عَلَى مَا فَعَلُوا وَهُمْ  
يَعْلَمُونَ

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(1) Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse 286

“And those who, when happen to commit a shameful act or wrong themselves, remember Allah, then seek forgiveness for their sins.”<sup>(1)</sup> The words remember Allah stands for recalling His Greatness as well as His chastisement. One who keeps in his mind these two attributes of Allah cannot dare to be disobedient. Allah is always to be remembered. It is a great daring on ones part to forget Him and commit sin after sin.

## **Value of Leisure** (فراغت کی قدر)

Some people keep on putting off till they finish a certain task in hand, before they turn to Allah asking for His forgiveness but the unexpected rush of events overtakes them. In the end, they are left with no time to do anything. One should therefore avail himself of whatever opportunity comes his way. Therefore, one should not put off the task of turning to Allah and ask for His forgiveness. Knowing that meditation over Allah’s greatness and chastisement makes one penitent, one should set aside some free time for it. Many people do not appreciate the value of leisure. Little do they realize that time is a God given blessing. One *hadith* states that:

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(1) Surah Al-i-Imran, Verse 135

We should give five things preference over five other things (اغتنم خمساً قبل خمس). One of these things is "Consider your leisure a boom before you become pre-occupied" (فراغک قبل شغلک). You can appreciate the value of leisure if you only look closely at the condition through which the busy people pass. They have no time to meditate. They always appear to be caught up in a mess. A Persian verse describes the state of such people as follows:

چومیرد مبتلا میرد چوخیزد مبتلا خیزد

"Distracted do they die and distracted shall they be when they are raised (from their graves)".

Another couplet brings out the value of leisure in these words:

خوشا روزگارے که دارد کیے  
که بازار حرصش نباشد بیے  
بقدر ضرورت یسارے بود  
کند کارے از مرد کارے بود

"The day a man spends without showing greed is a happy day. Wisely he works just so much as would suffice him and he minds his own business."

The second thing in the *hadith* is "Consider health a blessing before sickness" (صحتک قبل سقمک). The third thing is "Consider youth a blessing before

you attain old age” (شبابک قبل هرمک) A *hadith* says:

من أصبح آمنا في سربه معافا في جسده وعندة قوت يومه فكانما  
حيزت له الدنيا بخذا فيرها

“When a man gets up in the morning with his faith intact and his body fit and he possesses one day’s sustenance, he should feel as if he possesses the whole world with all its blessings”

This is a fact because even if he happens to have more he is going to derive strength from it for one day only and does not stand the chance of benefiting more than someone who happens to have less. According to a Persian verse:

گر بریزی بحر را در کوزه  
چند گنجد قسمت یک روزه  
چون ترانانی و خرقانی بود  
هر بن موئے تو سلطانی بود

"If the whole sea (meaning all the riches of the world) is collected in a cup, still you will get only one day’s ration for yourself. And when you have got your day’s ration of clothing and meals, you consider yourself as rich as a king"

There is a story relating to old times that a rich man once went to inspect his treasures lying in a big underground house. That house was opened only occasionally. It so happened that the rich

man took a long time to return. Nobody was aware of his being inside. The servant closed the door. It was a big house spread over a vast area with a number of doors. The rich man went far inside the interior of the house and no sound reached out. The man, who was a Jew, died of thirst and hunger lying on the heap of precious stones. In that condition of hunger and thirst if somebody had asked him what these precious stones were worth, he would have considered a biscuit and a glass of water more valuable than those treasures.

According to another story, a hungry man found a bag and was disappointed to find golden coins in it. He threw the bag on the ground exclaiming, it would have been of some use if there had been wheat in it.

## **Repent without delay** (توبہ میں جلدی)

In short, leisure, health and the means of livelihood are great blessings. These do not remain available for ever and one should realize their value. One should avail the leisure time and seek Allah's forgiveness at the earliest. Some people do not do so exulting in Allah's kindness and forgiveness. They forget the fact that we

have been apprised of these attributes of Allah, so that those of us who are repentant do not despair but hope to be forgiven and be normal again. A Persian verse states:

باز آ باز آ ہر انچہ ہستی باز آ  
گر کافر و گہر و بت پرستی باز آ  
این درگہ ما درگہ نومیدی نیست  
صد بار اگر توبہ شکستی باز آ

"Repent, repent, whoever you are; a disbeliever a fire worshipper, an idolater. Whosoever you might be, turn back. Never lose hope of being forgiven, even if you have slipped over and over again"

The promise of forgiveness has not been given for making one bold at committing more sins. The good tidings about Allah's being kind and forgiving, demands that one should be obedient instead of being obstinate. In our worldly relations, it is observed that if one is kind to another person, the latter respond with love and obedience instead of defiance.

## **Pleasure in sinning** (لذت گناہ)

For the reasons stated above, the demand for obedience to Allah is a valid and natural demand. But at the same time, we find that the pleasure

that lies in a sin, has its own attractions that make it sometimes irresistible. The question arises as to which of the two demands should be met. The ambiguity that appears to be there, would be resolved by looking at the demands in their true perspective. The pleasure that one finds in a sin is like itching on the body. It has no inherent pleasure. Whatever pleasure is felt is the result of a disease that is there. The itching spot soon turns into a blister. This confirms the fact that it is the manifestation of a disease. It is similar to the condition that is seen in a snake bitten man who finds bitter things taste as sweets. A prudent person would not indulge in such a pleasure in preference to the promise of a blessing in obedience to Allah.

## **The pleasure in obedience**

(لذت طاعت)

Real pleasure lies in obeying Allah. The disobedient people continue liking a life full of temporal pleasure of this world because they have not tasted the immense pleasure that lies in doing righteous deeds, leading a pious life and submitting to the will of Allah. Those who know the value of this pleasure that obedience to Allah brings are prepared to make all kind of sacrifices

to achieve it. Hazarat Ibrahim bin Adham renounced his kingdom seeking this pleasure, Hazrat Umar bin Abdul Aziz gave up the royal dress and contented himself with ordinary clothing. Shiekh Abdul Qadir Jilani declined the offer made by Sultan Sanjar, to rule over a part of his empire, called Neemroz. While declining this offer, Shiekh Abdul Qadir Jilani wrote a few verses in reply, the translation of which is as follows:

چو چتر سنجری رخ بختم سیاه باد  
در دل بود اگر هوس ملک سنجری

"If ever I covet that I may own the kingdom of King Sanjar, I would invoke a curse upon myself that my future may become as dark as the umbrellas of kingdom"

زانگه که یافتم خبر از ملک نیم شب  
من ملک نیم روز بیک جو نمی خرم

"From the time I have been given the strength that enables me to get up at midnight and pray to Allah, I would not like to purchase Neemroz for one grain of oat"<sup>(1)</sup>

بفراع دل زمانے نظرے بماء روئے

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(1) Neemroz is the name of an area but literally it mean mid-day

به از آنکه چتر شاهی همه روز هاؤ هوئے

"It is better to be able to find a moment of leisure and turn to Allah devotedly than being a master of a kingdom in which there is constant uproar and disturbance"

پس از سی سال این معنی محقق شد به خاقانی  
که یکدم با خدا بودن به از ملک سلیمانی

"After 30 years it has dawned upon Khaqani (the poet) that a moment spent in meditation of Allah is better than the kingdom of Solomon"

The worldly comforts and pleasure are in reality a punishment. The Quran says:

وَلَا تُعْجِبْكَ أَمْوَالُهُمْ وَأَوْلَادُهُمْ إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ أَنْ يُعَذِّبَهُمْ بِهَا فِي  
الدُّنْيَا وَتَزْهَقَ أَنْفُسُهُمْ وَهُمْ كَافِرُونَ

"And their wealth and children should not attract you. Allah only wills to punish them with these in this world and that their souls depart while they are disbelievers"<sup>(1)</sup>

## **Consequence of Disobedience**

(نافرمانی کا اثر)

It does not lie in one's power to secure the pleasures and comforts referred to in the preceding paragraph. And if somehow these are obtained, their constant care, the necessity to

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(1) Surah al Taubah, Verse 85

keep them under use, and the entailing discomfort, are a source of permanent torture. Real solace can be found only by establishing contact with Allah. The Quran says:

أَلَا بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ الْقُلُوبُ

“Listen, the hearts find peace only in the remembrance of Allah.”<sup>(1)</sup>

Most of our troubles are the results of our sins. Some of them are universal and take the shape of epidemic diseases (such as plague) or mutual disagreements. These are the consequences of general disobedience. The onset of these diseases or troubles may appear to be due to a physical cause but it is in reality the sins which are responsible for the punishment that are given in this way. There is no contradiction between there being an apparent physical cause for the diseases and the sins being responsible for these diseases. They confine themselves to medical treatment only, but it is essential that they should ask for Allah’s forgiveness also.

As the poet says:

چند خوانی حکمت یونانیان  
حکمت ایمانیان راہم بخوان

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(1) Surah Ar-Ra’d, Verse 28

“You have studied enough of medical science; now acquire some knowledge of spiritual science also”

صحت این حس بجوئید از طبیب

صحت آن حس بجوئید از حبیب

You seek cure for your bodily ailments from a doctor; turn to that beloved (the holy Prophet, peace be upon him) for the cure of the ailments of the soul”

صحت این حس زمعموری تن

صحت آن حس زتخریب بدن

“While the health of the body is gained by strengthening it, the health of the soul is gained by weakening it.”

According to the Quran, the troubles follow sins. A relevant ayah states:

وَمَا أَصَابَكُمْ مِّنْ مُّصِيبَةٍ فَبِمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِيكُمْ

“Whatever hardship befalls you, is because of what your own hands have committed.”<sup>(1)</sup>

A God fearing man was once riding a horse. The horse started misbehaving. The pious man at once ascribed the disobedience of the horse to his own sins that he might have committed that morning. As a poet says (in Persian):

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(1) Surah Ash Shura, Verse 30

توہم گردن از حکم دا ور مپیچ  
کہ گردن نہ پیچد ز حکم توہمیچ  
ہر کہ ترسید از حق و تقوی گزید  
ترسد از وے جن و انس و ہر کہ دید

“Do not try to disobey Allah; others will not disobey you. Whoever fears Allah and leads a pious life, he attains such a position that all mankind, jinn and all others who set their eyes on him, fear him.”

## **Impact of Obedience**

(طاعت کا اثر)

A story relevant to the above topic comes from our spiritual master *Hazrat Haji Imdadullah Sahib* (may Allah bless him). While returning from Piran Kiliar, he came to Saharanpur, where people arranged his stay in a haunted house. The jinn haunting that house had become a source of trouble for the people. The house had not been inhabited and kept locked. When Haji Sahib got up at night, a man came and said Assalam-o-Alaikum, shook hands and sat down. Haji Sahib was surprised (as the house was bolted from inside), and asked him who he was. He replied that he was a jinn and the house had been lying vacant because of him. Haji Sahib asked him if he did not fear Allah. The jinn promised not to create

troubles for the people in future and left the house. Thereafter the house became inhabited. This was nothing but the result of Haji Sahib's obedience to Allah.

Another incident narrated by historians is about Hazrat Umar. After the conquest of Egypt by Hazrat Amr-ibn-El-Aas, once the river Nile dried up. The local people told him about a ritual of throwing a beautiful virgin girl in the river for a bountiful inundation. Hazrat Amr-ibn-El-Aas said this would never happen again and referred the matter to the Caliph Hazrat Umar (May Allah be pleased with him). Hazrat Umar (May Allah be pleased with him) in his reply sent a note addressed to the River Nile, saying: "If you are flowing by your own will, we have no need of you. The Almighty Allah is enough to look after our needs. But if you flow under Allah's command then, why you stopped flowing under Satan's orders." As soon as the note was thrown into Nile, the river started flowing again and it is doing so ever since. Thus that evil practice was abolished.

This is the blessing which Allah's obedience brings. In fact when a person seeks Allah's pleasure in everything that he does, all his tasks

are easily accomplished. In short obedience brings relief while disobedience brings nothing but worries.

## **Actions Deceive** (اعمال کا دھوکہ)

Now-a-days sins are not deemed responsible for the misfortunes and troubles that come our way. People are generally unaware of the gravity of sinfulness. They do not regard their own sins or misdeeds playing any part in the onset. Though at times, they do consider other's sins to be responsible for their own troubles but nobody examines his own self. In olden times people used to think otherwise. To quote one example, people once went to *Hazrat Zunnoon Misri* who was a God fearing man of Egypt and complained about draught. The saint replied that he himself was the greatest sinner and the rains had perhaps been withheld due to his sins. He further said that if he migrated from there, the rains might fall again. Thereafter he left the place and the rains started falling again. Keeping this example before us we should always look upon our misdeeds. But instead of doing that we extol our virtues. While we do not even know if these are worth

presenting before Allah. We wrongly suppose that they are worthwhile. As a poet says:

خواجه پندارد که دارد حاصل  
حاصل خواجه بجز پندار نیست

“The chieftain imagines he has gained something by doing some good deeds. It is just his self-conceit that is his gain.

از دست وزیان که برآید  
کز عهده شکرش بدر آید

“By his actions and words, a man cannot thank God enough for His kindness and benevolence.

منت منه که خدمت سلطان همی کنی  
منت شناس ازو که بخدمت بداشتت

“If you are doing any service to the king, do not pretend to have done him a favour. On the contrary you should be grateful that he has given you an opportunity to serve him.”

The people who take pride in having done some good deeds, it is just their supposition that these are good deeds. But often these deeds are worthless because they are performed in an improper way. For example I recall someone who once started fanning me in a very irritating manner. While that man was under the impression that he was rendering a good service

and was bringing me comfort, in reality he was a source of annoyance to me.

There are some people who think that their sins are the cause of their trouble. They become submissive and engage themselves in seeking forgiveness. But they start with the idea that when their object is achieved, they would give it up. An example is of the plague epidemic. When it is rampant, people perform prayers. But as soon as it is gone people abandon their prayers. This kind of attitude is nothing but deceiving the Almighty Allah.

A poet says:

زنهار ازاں قوم نباشی کہ فریہند  
حق را بسجودے و نبی را بہ درودے

“Don’t be of such people who deceive Allah by prostrating before him and his holy Prophet by sending blessings upon him.” Referring to this attitude of man, the Quran says:

دَعَا نَا لِجَنْبِہٖ ۚ اَوْ قَاعِدًا اَوْ قَابِئًا فَلَمَّا كَشَفْنَا عَنْہُ صُرَّہٗ ۚ مَرَّ کَانَ لَمْ  
یَدْعُنَا اِلٰی صُرِّ مَسَّہٗ

“When man is afflicted by a hardship, he prays to us (at all times), when reclining or sitting or standing. But when we remove his hardship, his

just takes his way as though he had never prayed to us in any hardship that afflicted him.”<sup>(1)</sup>

Such an attitude deserve severe punishment. But due to His magnificence and mercifulness, Allah is ever forgiving despite our insolence and misdeeds. That is why we continue getting our livelihood and remain under his protection. The poet says:

خدائے راست مسلم بزرگواری وحلم  
کہ جرم بیند و نان برقرار مے دارد

“Greatness and Forbearance are His attributes; He observes us sinning and yet grants us our sustenance”

If sinning results in the troubles of daily life what pleasure we could derive from it. Doubtlessly, the best way for us is to shun all sins forever. In the light of what has been said, no excuse is left with a wise man to indulge in sinfulness. Taking sins lightly is contrary to faith, prudence and facts of human experience. According to one *hadith* a Muslim views a sin like a mountain overhanging, under which he is seated and fears that it would fall upon him; to save himself he must get away from it. On the other hand a hypocrite takes a sin

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(1) Surah Yunus, Verse 12

like a fly coming and sitting upon him which he can drive away with his hand. Taking the matter so lightly he goes on sinning without fear.

Having dwelt upon the dangers involved in sinning, we would also explain as how to seek forgiveness for past misdeeds. Every day at a fixed time one should meditate over the following matters and thus take stock of one's life:

- (i) Should take into consideration the evils of the sin and its harmful effects;
- (ii) Should ponder over the punishment that his sins would entail;
- (iii) Should remember well whose disobedience he is incurring by indulging in sinfulness;
- (iv) Should revive in his mind a thought of Allah's kindnesses;
- (v) Should look at his own attitude whereby he is responding to Allah's all-pervading kindness;
- (vi) Should then directly address his own self, admonish it and frighten it out of its sinfulness.

- (vii) Should revive in his mind all the imminent events relating to death and the life thereafter.

This meditation will diminish his love for this world which is the root-cause of most of the sins. There is a *hadith* which says, (اکثروا ذکرہا ذم اللذات) "Remember death over and over again; this will curb the love for the pleasures of this world." In addition to the above, a sort of usual meditation has also been suggested in these lines of an Urdu poem:

خوب ملک روس ہے اور سر زمین طوس ہے	کل ہوس اس طرح سے ترغیب دیتی تھی مجھے
اس طرف آواز طبل ادھر صدائے کوس ہے	گر میسر ہو تو کیا عشرت سے کیجیے زندگی
شب ہوئی تو ماہ رویوں سے کنار و بوس ہے	صبح سے تا شام چلتا ہے مے گلگلوں کا دور
چل دکھاؤں تو توقید آزا کا محبوس ہے	سننے ہی عبرت یہ بولی اک تماشا میں تجھے
جس جگہ جان تمننا سو طرح مایوس ہے	لے گئی یکبارگی گور غریباں کی طرف
یہ سکندر ہے یہ دارا ہے یہ کیا کوس ہے	مر قدیں دو تین دکھلا کر لگی کہنے مجھے
کچھ بھی ان کے ساتھ غیر از حسرت و افسوس ہے	پوچھ تو ان سے کہ جاہ حشمت دنیا سے آج

"The other day I was having an exciting desire to be in the countries of Russia and Toos, which have their attractions to satisfy one's lust for sins. My desire addressed me and said, If you have the means to enjoy, spend your life seeking pleasures; Make such arrangements that from all sides you hear the sounds of music; from dawn to

dusk have glasses of wine; pass the night making love to persons with faces as bright and pretty as the moon. My sense of self admonition which was listening, summoned me to show me something. Telling me that I was a captive of my desires, it took me to a graveyard where all hopes lay frustrated. She pointed towards two or three graves and said, This is Alexander the Great, that is King Darius and that third one is Emperor Kai-Kaoos. Ask them whether out of the wealth, the dignity, and the status that they enjoyed in this world, they have anything left with them except regrets, longings and sorrows.”

After this meditation, love for this world will lose its intensity, feelings of penitence will prevail and the evil habit of sinning, God willing, shall be overcome. Allah is glorified. Hence if anyone contracts a disease (takes to sin) and is unable resist its temptation, the remedy has been provided for it in our religion. As the poet says:

دردآزار است ودرمان نیزیم  
دل فدائے او شد و جان نیزیم

“If some pain has been caused because of the beloved, its remedy also comes from Him. He is such a beloved that we have already sold out our

hearts to Him and now we are prepared to lay down our lives also for Him.”



## FRIVOLOUS ATTITUDE TOWARDS SINS



### THE SPEECHES OF HAZRAT THANVI (RA)

(Significance and Utility)

Hazrat Thanvi (RA), in his speeches, used to recite Khutba-e-Masura, followed by a verse from the Holy Quran or a hadith, and then explained it very impressively and thoroughly. His audience consisted of thousands of people from all classes of society: poor and rich, old and young, educated and illiterate, urban and rural, scholars, judges, lawyers, businessmen, etc. His style was so alluring that the audience felt mesmerized.

According to Syed Suleiman Nadvi, 400 speeches of Hazrat Thanvi were compiled. These comprised Islamic teachings, argument against newly invented things in religion and useful practical recommendations. He used to captivate his audience with facts, advice as well as interesting anecdotes. The other religious speakers generally discuss belief and religious observances in their sermons, but Hazrat Thanvi also used to stress upon people to improve their practical life and inculcate moral values in them.

According to Dr. Abdul Hayee Arifi, the speeches of Hazrat Thanvi had a God gifted style which enlightened the hearts of the audience, gave them a spiritual insight and a proper understanding of religion; they were able to distinguish between right and wrong, their beliefs were strengthened and all their apprehensions were gone. It was his love of God that made his words so impressive, his style so powerful and his speeches so irresistible.

How to benefit from these sermons: While reading these speeches, we need to ponder for a while and see if we are also suffering from the evils mentioned therein, and if so, try to get rid of them. We should be upset if virtues mentioned therein are missing on our part and should try to acquire them. A reading in such manner will, in sha Allah, benefit the reader and he will start feeling a change.